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## **Policing Wildlife:**

### *Perspectives on Criminality in Wildlife Crime*

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#### **Abstract**

This article presents green criminology research on wildlife law enforcement in the UK, an area of insecurity both about its place within criminal justice and about how it should be resourced and laws enforced. Wildlife crime predates the Government's Big Society in being primarily driven by Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) who shape the public policy and police response to wildlife crime. NGOs frequently argue for a strengthened wildlife enforcement regime with tougher sentences for wildlife offenders. Yet this article contests the perception of inadequate wildlife laws and the need for a more punitive regime, arguing that inherent enforcement problems undermine an otherwise adequate legislative regime. It offers a new typology of offenders, arguing that changes to legislation and a more punitive regime are inadequate solutions to address wildlife crime levels unless the existence of different types of offender and criminal behaviour are recognised and addressed in policy and enforcement practice.

**Key Words:** Green criminology, neutralization techniques, wildlife and environmental crime, NGOs

#### **Introduction**

This article examines criminality in wildlife crime, a distinct aspect of green criminology (Situ and Emmons, 2000; Lynch and Stretesky, 2003) within animal abuse (Henry, 2004; Linzey, 2009) and species justice discourse (White, 2008). The research examined criminality, UK wildlife crime, policy and law enforcement between 2001 and 2009, with a subsequent review in 2010.

While some non-governmental organisations (NGOs) define wildlife crimes according to moral values, raising substantive arguments for legislative reform on ethical grounds or the perceived effectiveness of legislation (Wilson et al., 2007; Schneider 2008; RSPB, 2010), this research

is primarily concerned with wildlife criminality. Its definition of wildlife crime adapts the legal concept of wildlife from the UK's Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, namely naturally occurring wildlife, i.e. any, bird, animal, mammal or reptile which is resident in or a visitor to Great Britain, in a wild state or which is a non-native bird, animal mammal or reptile subject to UK legislation by virtue of its (European Union) conservation status.

In addition to the commercial trade and smuggling activities commonly associated with wildlife trade, wildlife crime includes the following types of criminal activity:

- Unlawful killing or wounding
- Robbery (Taking a protected species from the wild)
- Disturbance of a protected species
- Cruelty and animal welfare offences
- Unlicensed (and unlawful) gambling
- Damage to property
- Illegal poisoning and unlawful storage and/or use of pesticides
- Theft and handling 'stolen' goods
- Deception
- Fraud and forgery
- Criminal damage (of protected sites)
- Firearms related offences

A wildlife crime is thus an unauthorised act or omission that violates UK wildlife or environmental law, is subject to criminal prosecution and criminal sanctions and may involve harm or killing of wildlife, removal from the wild, possession, sale or the exploitation of wildlife incorporating any of the activities above.

This article briefly considers the importance of wildlife crime as a distinct area of study and identifies perceived problems with wildlife crime and its enforcement, before outlining specific offender types involved in wildlife crime. Finally it makes some recommendations on dealing with wildlife offenders and criminality.

### **The importance of wildlife crime**

Wildlife crime is significant as a case study of policing, criminal behaviour, NGO activity and environmental law enforcement within green criminology. NGOs exert considerable influence on criminal justice policy; some carry out operational law enforcement activities. Statutory agencies' reliance on voluntary organisations offers an opportunity to study a fringe area of policing and co-dependence between NGOs and mainstream justice agencies in protecting wildlife. This also provides an opportunity to study the application of environmentalism, animal rights, green criminology and perspectives on environmental justice to a specific area of crime.

However wildlife crime policy predominantly treats all offenders as rational profit-driven actors, while public policy statements often fail to identify wildlife crime's causes, or clarify the intended impact of policy on potential offenders beyond basic ideas of detection or apprehension. This research explicitly considered distinct aspects of criminal behaviour and what the abuse of animals in the wild and the exploitation of wildlife reveal about criminal personalities, motivations and behaviour. Comparative analysis of all data collected during this research identified issues relating to offenders often missing from NGO and policy literature, and informed a comprehensive assessment of contemporary wildlife offending.

## **Methodology**

The research methodology consisted of 24 semi-structured interviews with wildlife crime practitioners, policy makers and researchers to include representatives of the leading wildlife crime NGOs: the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) (and its Scottish equivalent), the League Against Cruel Sports (LACS), and Scottish Badgers; plus selected Police and other statutory enforcement representatives. Interviews were supplemented with documentary analysis of published policy perspectives, media releases and campaign material, transcripts of cases and submissions to Government on wildlife crime issues.

Specific questions concerning investigative problems and the perceived reasons why people committed wildlife crime were asked in interviews and considered in documentary analysis to represent a form of interpretive interactionism (Denzin, 2001), making the closed world of wildlife crime and environmentalism inhabited by NGOs, enforcers and offenders understandable. The research also critically evaluated previous wildlife and environmental crime literature, also incorporating the author's participant observation of wildlife crime investigations casework and environmental NGO culture.

## **Perceived problems**

While policy and campaigning documents often reflect a shared perception of UK wildlife law's inadequacy in deterrence, sentencing and punishment, closer examination identifies inherent practical enforcement problems in UK wildlife law enforcement. In 2002 University of Wolverhampton researchers identified that public policy attitudes towards the illegal wildlife trade were 'erratic' in their response with the result that "the courts perceive wildlife crime as low priority, even though it is on the increase" (Lowther et al., 2002: 5).

Although the Wolverhampton report's focus is wildlife trade, its conclusions on inconsistent and inadequate legislative enforcement are echoed by NGOs in looking at other aspects of wildlife crime (Nurse, 2003; 2008). Analysis of the available enforcement literature reveals wildlife crime as being subject to an inconsistent enforcement regime (albeit one

where individual police officers contribute significant amounts of time and effort within their own area). Legislative inconsistency (e.g. variance in police powers and penalties across different legislation) is often reflected in NGO policies as evidence of wildlife law's inadequacy and need for wholesale reform to achieve deterrence and punitive objectives. However, the ad-hoc development of wildlife policing where many officers' wildlife crime responsibilities are in addition to their 'main' duties (Kirkwood, 1994; Roberts et al., 2001) creates a risk that, no matter what the legislative regime, the enforcement of wildlife legislation and its ability to address criminality may itself be inconsistent and inadequate, even if campaigners become fully satisfied with the legislation and any sentencing provisions.

Cook et al. (2002) later analysed evidence of organised crime involvement in the illegal trade in wildlife, confirming evidence that "organised crime elements are becoming increasingly involved in the most lucrative parts of the illegal trade and they are prepared to use intimidation and violence" (2002: 4). Their findings were consistent with evidence of practitioners to this research that "parallel trafficking of drugs and wildlife along shared smuggling routes [takes place] with the latter as a subsidiary trade" and "the use of ostensibly legal shipments of wildlife to conceal drugs" (Cook et al., 2002: 5) while illegal shipments of wildlife are often also disguised as legal ones (Nurse, 2008).

Linking wildlife crime to organised crime and, in particular, the trade in drugs is an important step in bringing wildlife crime (albeit only this one aspect) within the remit of mainstream criminal justice and legitimising its value as a distinct area of study. Synergy exists between wildlife trade's similarity with classical positivist notions of crime (Vold and Bernard, 1986) and offenders clearly motivated by profit (particularly with respect to trade in endangered species which can sell for thousands of pounds) and involved in other forms of crime (Hutton, 1981; Linzey, 2009). Schneider (2008) and Lowther et al. (2002) found that organised crime recognises wildlife crime as a 'soft option' where its traditional operations and transit routes can be utilised with a lesser risk of enforcement activity. A Police representative interviewed for this research confirmed:

... an organised criminal group will deal with anything that will make a profit and there [are] profits to be made from the trade in rare and endangered wildlife...One particular area of interest is to determine where an organised gang might have established routes for the trade in various commodities. Where this is the case, it is possible for a gang to switch from one item, such as drugs, to another like wildlife. While the commodity may change the criminal activity doesn't.

While the UK has an excellent network of Police Wildlife Crime Officers (WCOs), wildlife crime is enforced reactively, relying on charities to do the bulk of the investigative work, receive crime reports and collect

wildlife crime data. Despite high profile publicity for wildlife crime it remains at the fringes of mainstream criminal justice allowing offender denial of their criminal activity and, particularly within the game-rearing industry, to justify the illegal killing of wildlife as legitimate employment-related activity (e.g. predator control) or simply an error of judgment but not a criminal act. This concern was reflected by a number of interviewees. One NGO representative identified that gamekeepers are sometimes supported by employers and "have been told all the way through right up to the trial, 'It's OK you're going to get fined, the worst that can happen is that you'll get fined'". Another from a Scottish conservation organisation confirmed that:

There are certain [shooting] estates where there's a certain amount of pride taken that its pest free. When they're talking about killing pests they're not just talking about your common rat but killing anything right up to anything with a hooked beak. It's their tradition in some respects ... As far as they're concerned, two hen harriers is OK but more than two is a nuisance and is unacceptable. One badger sett is fine, more than one badger sett, no, they don't want it.

Matza (1964) identified that delinquents often accept a moral obligation to be bound by the law but can drift in and out of delinquency, fluctuating between total freedom and total restraint, drifting from one behavioural extreme to another, accepting the norms of society but developing a special set of justifications for behaviour that violates social norms. These techniques of neutralisation (Sykes and Matza, 1957; Eliason, 2003) allow offenders to express guilt over their illegal acts but also to rationalise between those whom they can victimise and those they cannot. While offenders are not immune to the demands of conformity they find a way to rationalise when and where they should conform and when it may be acceptable to break the law, an issue which explicitly emerged in interviews and documentary analysis of wildlife criminality. Many fox hunting enthusiasts, for example, strongly opposed the UK's Hunting Act 2004 as being an illegitimate and unnecessary interference with a traditional activity expressing this view via formal legal challenges to the legitimacy of the Act in *R v Jackson* [2005] UKHL 56 and the *Countryside Alliance* cases [2007] and in the European Court of Human Rights (*Friend v the United Kingdom* application no 16072/06). Thus their continued hunting with dogs is seen as legitimate protest against an unjust law and is denied as being criminal (Skidelsky, 2003; Prado and Prato, 2005).

Wildlife crime policy is primarily based on "a belief in the preventive effect of law enforcement and the criminal justice agencies" (Bright, 1993: 63). Emphasis on detection and apprehension, however, can result in a regime that simply punishes offenders but fails to achieve other objectives - for example, preventing victimisation or repeat offending. While, theoretically, if severe punishment and the likelihood of apprehension and receiving that punishment is known (e.g. by providing and publicising

detection rates and severe mandatory sentences for offences) the rational offender will choose not to commit crime, wildlife crime investigators regularly re-encounter the same offenders; evidence exists that even those offenders who are repeatedly caught, convicted and fined are not deterred (Wainwright, 2006).

### **Identifying the wildlife offender**

Crime and criminality are predominantly male concerns (Groombridge, 1996) reflecting the role of gender and predominance of male offenders in serious and violent crime and concerns over youth crime; in particular both the propensity towards violence of young males and the extent to which young males might become victims of crime (Norland et al., 1981; Campbell, 1993; Flood-Page and Mackie, 2000; Harland et al., 2005). The socialisation of young men and the extent to which routes to manhood leave young men confused or anxious about what it means to be a man can influence young males' criminality (Harland et al., 2005; Kimmell et al., 2005). Restrictive notions of masculinity dictate that many men are forced into roles as defenders and protectors of their communities (Harland et al., 2005) and are also encouraged to comply with the image of the "fearless male" (Goodey, 1997: 401) and achieve the ideal of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1995; Harland et al., 2005). Men are encouraged to reject any behaviour construed as being feminine or un-masculine or which does not conform to traditional masculine stereotypes and engage in behaviour (such as the 'policing' of other men) which reinforces hegemonic masculinity (Beattie, 2004).

Many wildlife crimes involve appropriate male behaviours such as aggression, thrill-seeking or having an adventurous nature. Recklessness and assertiveness are conducive to committing wildlife crime in sometimes difficult and dangerous outdoor conditions, with a requirement to negotiate wildlife (e.g. dangerous species and adult wildlife protecting its young) and the attentions of law-enforcement and NGOs. In addition, the outlet for aggression allowed by such crimes as badger-baiting and badger digging, and hare coursing, and the opportunities for gambling related to these offences (and others such as cock fighting) appeal to young men seeking to establish their identity and assert their masculinity and power over others. Such crimes by their very nature provide opportunities for men to engage in and observe violence (Flynn, 2002), and to train animals (fighting cocks, dogs) that represent an extension of themselves and reinforce elements of male pride, strength, endurance and the ability to endure pain.

Wildlife offenders are predominantly male, and men occupy many of the predator control jobs in the game rearing industry in the UK, in which significant illegal killing of wildlife takes place. Huntsman Julian Barnfield in his submission to the Burns Inquiry on Hunting with Dogs observed that his job came with a tied rent free house without which his family could not live in the countryside (Burns et al., 2000). Gamekeepers and huntsmen are thus placed firmly in the male provider role and lack of success in predator

control, and by inference a failure to perform adequately in the job, potentially leads to loss of the family home, the resultant feelings of inadequacy, and damage to male pride and self-esteem. While masculinities may not be the cause of all wildlife crime, it is certainly a recurring factor in some wildlife crimes.

Green criminologists and sociologists in the US have established a discourse concerning the links between animal abuse and violence towards humans which informs analysis of wildlife offending. Conboy-Hill (2000) defines animal abuse as “the deliberate or neglectful harm of animals and can include beating, starvation, slashing with knives, sodomy, setting on fire, decapitation, skinning alive amongst other actions” (2000:1). Ascione’s definition of animal abuse and cruelty identified it as being “socially unacceptable behaviour that intentionally causes unnecessary pain, suffering, or distress to and/or death of an animal” (1993: 228). Similarities between these definitions and this article’s definition of wildlife crime exist and, in particular, the prohibited methods of killing animals (stabbing, burning, crushing etc.) contained in the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996. The increasing evidence of US research is that childhood abuse of animals is linked to later interpersonal violence (Felthouse and Kellert, 1987; Ascione, 1993). Beetz (2009) suggests that abuse which affects empathy may be a primary factor in determining what type of offender an individual becomes and that violent attitudes towards animals can indicate a lack of empathy (Beetz, 2009; Brantley, 2009). While not all wildlife crime involves violence or violent abuse, where it does occur it indicates that offenders may develop a tendency towards violence that manifests itself first in animal abuse but which sometimes escalates into adult human violence (Nurse, 2008; Flynn, 2009). In particular, offenders engaged in thrill-seeking or ‘sport’ activities that involve the exploitation of animals are frequently motivated by the power that they gain over animals and justify their activities by denial of pain. Fox-hunting, fishing, deer-hunting or hare coursing enthusiasts commonly argue that their quarry does not anticipate death and enjoys the chase (Burns et al., 2000). In addition, a belief in the widespread support for the activity, and a questioning of the legitimacy of those who wished to see it outlawed (Sykes and Matza, 1957) persists among many hunting enthusiasts. Arguments raised include that “to criminalise an activity - such as foxhunting - in response to a campaign which itself is largely criminal sets a precedent which threatens all law abiding citizens whether they love foxhunting or loathe it” (Ashford Valley Hunt Submission to the Burns Inquiry on Hunting with Dogs, 2000). Such arguments rely on the perceived criminality of organisations like the Animal Liberation Front (ALF), while at the same time ignoring the political legitimacy of organisations like LACS, Animal Aid and the RSPCA.

Denial of injury reinforces the offender view that their activities cause no harm while also confirming the view of animals as a commodity rather than as sentient beings suffering as a result of the individual’s actions. The concept of inequality between humans and non-humans is



central not just to the legal status of animals but also to how individuals treat animals (Wise, 2000) and allows for denial of consequences similar to that employed by burglars who, when confronted by their victims in restorative justice conferencing, often express surprise about the impact of their actions (Shapland et al., 2007; Sherman and Strang, 2007).

Attitudes towards regulation are also an important factor. Eliason's (2003) assessment of poachers in Kentucky (which included those illegally taking wildlife resources) concluded that convicted poachers routinely employed neutralisation techniques. These techniques included denial of responsibility, claim of entitlement, denial of the necessity of the law, defence of necessity and recreation and excitement (Sykes and Matza, 1957) both before and after engaging in illegal activity. Significant numbers of Eliason's interviewees claimed minor or technical infringements and denied the right of law enforcement officers to take action against them or contended that there were better uses of officers' time. This theme was also present in this research.

The involvement of environmental NGOs without which offenders might not be apprehended provides an additional motivation for some individuals to commit crime. Different offenders may use different neutralisations and, may also be subject to different motivations. By considering the different motivations and behaviours of offenders it is possible to determine if there are distinct types of wildlife offender, as follows.

### **Developing offender models**

A range of evidence including interviews, and comparative analysis of NGO and practitioner views with documentary sources informed the development of new offender models by this research.

The analysis indicates that wildlife offenders commit their crimes for the following general reasons:

1. Profit or commercial gain
2. Thrill or sport
3. Necessity of obtaining food
4. Antipathy towards governmental and law enforcement bodies
5. Tradition and cultural reasons

While these are the primary motivations, ignorance of the law is also sometimes a factor employed as justification or neutralization technique (Sykes and Matza, 1957). Roberts et al. (2001: 27) surveyed 87 organisations about their perceptions to identify what NGOs considered to be the motivation for wildlife crime. Both this article's and Roberts' research (2001) indicate that when asked, NGOs accept different factors involved in motivating individuals to commit wildlife crimes, and are able to articulate what these are, even though this is not always reflected in their published policies.

This article's analysis thus concludes that wildlife offenders fall into four (relatively) distinct types defined by their primary motivator; a new classification of offenders is developed by this research as follows:

1. *Model A: Traditional Criminals* - who derive direct (and sometimes personal financial) benefit from their crimes. These are rational offenders involved in a low-risk, high return form of crime. Wildlife is viewed simply as a resource through which profit can be obtained (Fox, 2002) and their offences are viewed (by them) as minor or technical crime.
2. *Model B: Economic Criminals* - who commit wildlife crimes as a direct result of particular economic pressures (e.g. direct employer-pressure or profit driven crime within their chosen profession). This category is distinguished from the previous category because of the specific, mostly legitimate, employment-related nature of their motivation to commit crime. The Bat Conservation Trust representative, for example, commented that builders meant to survey for bats "will get a survey done and will just try to wriggle out of it. They think 'what's the fine going to be and what's the cost to me?' Often they will, just go ahead and do the work and take a chance anyway." Junior gamekeepers on shooting estates through differential association (Sutherland, 1973) learn techniques of poisoning and trapping from established staff (Nurse, 2008) as a means of ensuring healthy populations of game birds for shooting. Their crime is white-collar crime (Nelken, 1994), the responsibility of others (such as an employer). Awareness of the illegal nature of their actions leads to the justifications outlined by Sykes and Matza (1957) but the association with other offenders, the economic (and employment related) pressures to commit offences and the personal consequences for them should they fail are strong motivations to commit offences (Merton, 1968).
3. *Model C: Masculinities Criminals* - who commit offences involving harm to animals, exercising a stereotypical masculine nature both in terms of the exercise of power over animals and the links to sport and gambling. Perceptions by the offender of their actions being part of their culture where toughness, masculinity and smartness (Wilson, 1985) combine with a love of excitement. Offences are seldom committed by lone individuals and, in the case of badger-baiting, badger-digging and hare coursing for example, gambling and association with other like-minded males are factors and provide a strong incentive for new members to join already established networks of offenders (Hawley, 1993; Forsyth and Evans, 1998). In interview one NGO representative stated "I can't see a criminal society allowing Joe Soap the commoner, and his mates to be having badger baiting and betting on them, without wanting a cut... Badger crime is all about money... I think money, tradition, the figure in

the flat cap and with the whippet and the terriers is still around.” There is thus some link between these offences and low level organised crime.

4. *Model D: Hobby Criminals* - who commit those high status , low level crimes for which there is no direct benefit or underlying criminal ‘need’ and for which the criminal justice reaction is disproportionate. For example, mature egg collectors argue that there is no harm in continuing an activity that they commenced legitimately as schoolboys. Examination of case files and newspaper reports on egg collecting confirm that new collectors continue to be attracted to the ‘hobby’ and learn its ways through interaction with more established collectors, sometimes in an obsessional manner as egg collector Derek Lee acknowledged:

There are quite a few who are obsessed with it. Every single spring and summer they can’t wait to get out. If you put a child in a chocolate factory their eyes light up with excitement. It’s like that. When spring and summer come, the eggers are on edge. They’re like big kids. (cited in Barkham, 2006).

These offenders are distinguished from the previous category by the absence of harm/cruelty as a factor in the offences. The ‘hobby’ element is the primary motivator.

While the nature of the offences may be different, there is inevitably some overlap in the behaviours of offenders within the different models, although the weight attached to various determining factors varies. Egg collectors, badger diggers and gamekeepers are all, for example, keeping a traditional activity alive but in different ways and for different reasons. The egg collector pursues his ‘traditional’ hobby, whereas the gamekeeper perpetuates learned traditional behaviour in the form of a type of predator control handed down from gamekeeper to gamekeeper irrespective of changes in the law. The masculinities criminal may derive some financial gain from gambling but it is not a primary motivating factor whereas money is for the traditional criminal. What all offender types share is likely knowledge of their activities’ illegality (although there may be denial as to whether this should be the case) and that the likelihood of detection, apprehension and prosecution remains low.

These models will be developed in more detail in further work but a preliminary assessment of their primary motivating factors follows in Table 1.

**Table 1: Motivating factors and offending type**

Type of Criminal	Ignorance of the Law	Pressure from Employer or commercial Environment	Financial gain	A feeling of power	Excitement thrills or Enjoyment	Low risk crime	Keeping tradition or hobby alive
Traditional Criminal	No	No	Yes*	No	Yes	Yes	No
Economic Criminal	No	Yes*	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Masculinity Criminal	No	No	No	Yes*	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hobby Criminal	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes*

(\* indicates the primary motivator)

### **Preliminary perspectives on dealing with offenders**

Current policy treats all wildlife offenders as rational (financially motivated) criminals. Yet, the primary motivators identified for different offender types by this research indicate that different elements drive offenders making a uniform approach to offending and enforcement ineffectual. The wildlife crime enforcement regime thus requires modification, allowing for action appropriate to the circumstances of the offender and specific nature of the offence to be taken. For traditional criminals financial penalties may work as a means of negating any benefit they derive from their activity, but the same approach is unlikely to work with economic criminals. An argument can also be made that increased sentencing and use of prison has been unsuccessful in mainstream criminal justice (Wilson, 1985) and so the evidence that it will be effective in reducing or prevent wildlife crime is lacking. For traditional criminals, greater efforts should be made to attempt situational crime prevention, making the physical cost of committing the crime prohibitive as well as the actual cost and removing the perception that wildlife crime may be seen as a soft option.

For economic criminals, their employment provides the source of their offending behaviour and so any policy approach must include pressure on and penalties for the employer as well as actions which dictate that the risk of losing employment as a direct consequence of committing wildlife crime is a real possibility. The current legislative regime does not generally provide for culpability of landowners/employers for the actions of their staff (although the concept of vicarious liability has recently been introduced in Scotland), nor do countryside and game industry employees

suffer the stigma of conviction. As a practical means of dealing with these offenders this position should be altered so that conviction of a wildlife crime carries with it the threat of lost employment in the countryside and in the game rearing or fieldsports industries, as well as significant penalties for the employer.

For the masculinities offender, the effectiveness of prison or high fines is also questionable. Much like gang members in the inner-city US, those involved in organised crime, or youths who see ASBOs as a badge of honour (Youth Justice Board, 2006), masculinities offenders may come to see prison as simply an occupational hazard which also reinforces their male identity, providing confirmation of society's lack of understanding of their needs and culture. For these types of offender, situational crime prevention should be attempted and a real effort at rehabilitation made alongside the traditional law enforcement approach of detection and prosecution. Consideration may also need to be given to the circumstances in which groups of young men turn to crime with a violent element and whether the type of social work intervention combined with law enforcement activity that now takes place in parts of the US with animal abusers (Brantley, 2009; Clawson, 2009) could be applied in the UK.

Hobby offenders present a distinct policy and enforcement challenge as the drive to collect and the obsessive behaviour of such offenders cannot easily be overcome; fines and prison sentences could even strengthen the desire to offend by the drive to replace lost items such as a confiscated egg collection.

While prevention and detection of crimes should continue to be employed for these offenders, treatment to address the issues of collecting as well as education in the effects of wildlife crimes should be considered. Again, a strong situational crime prevention element could be attempted and in the case of hobby offenders this could be linked to sentencing to ensure that any sentencing provisions contain measures to prevent future offending as well as measures that attempt to address the causes of these crimes.

## **Conclusions**

This research identifies different types of offenders involved in wildlife crime, concluding that, contrary to the assumptions inherent in current policy, offenders do not all share the same motivations, behaviours, or operate within similar communities or control mechanisms. The research evidence informed development of models that reveal different types of offender and the motivations of each - based on what NGOs and practitioners have said in this research, case records and the research into animal abuse and wildlife crime that has been evaluated as part of this research. There is thus little point in treating all wildlife offenders as if they were the same and one conclusion that can be drawn from this research is that a blanket approach to wildlife criminality, offenders and enforcement is unlikely to be successful. The UK wildlife crime enforcement regime therefore needs to be adapted to provide for appropriate action that fits the

circumstances of the offender and allows the specific nature of the offence to be taken into account.

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